



**UMHB**

**MAREK-SMITH CENTER  
FOR TEACHER PREPARATION**

**UNIVERSITY OF MARY HARDIN-BAYLOR**



## PROJECT OVERVIEW

UMHB is the only known university in the United States to have a special needs lab in which undergraduate education majors work directly with children with disabilities, ages 3-21. The existing special needs lab serves the academic, social, and sensory needs of 50-60 children each week. As the university grows and recognizes the ongoing demand for highly trained teachers, this new state-of-the-art facility will lead the way for training and educating special education instructors. With cutting-edge technology, resources, equipment, and tools, the new center will enhance the learning experience of UMHB students and benefit the participants. Upon its completion in the fall of 2023, this 11,000-square-foot facility will serve as the premier center for special education training and instruction in the country and enable UMHB's College of Education to continue to train and inspire college students to pursue a career in special education.

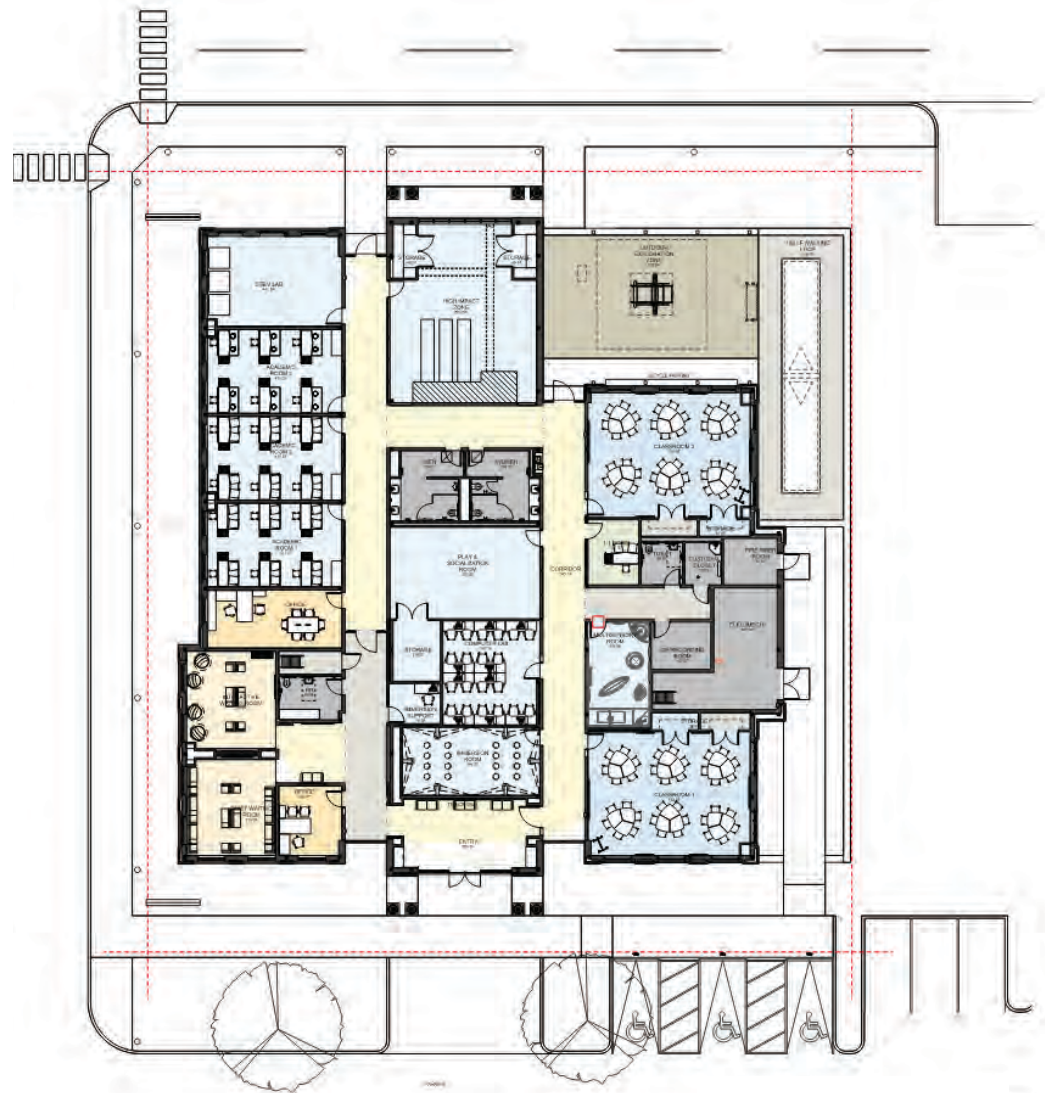
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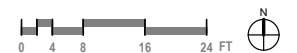
# FLOOR PLAN



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## FLOOR PLAN



# ROOM DESCRIPTIONS



## IMMERSION ROOM

The Immersion Room allows for all participants, both children and UMHB students, to learn in an interactive environment. The room will have 360 degree images projected on the walls through which content is taught. Participants can interact with the images creating an engaging and experiential learning environment.

## LOBBY

The Lobby will be a beautiful place for parents and UMHB students to meet and discuss the child's progress. The Lobby will also display the names of the generous donors who made the Marek-Smith Center for Teacher Preparation possible. Most prominent will be the story of Logan Marek and Evan Smith for whom the building is named.

## HIGH IMPACT ZONE

Some children with disabilities lack self-regulation skills necessary to manage external and internal stimulation. The High Impact Zone is designed for the child who needs deep sensory input through multiple sources. Students will gain this input through slides, swings, zip lines, climbing and crash mats.

## OUTDOOR EXPLORATION ZONE

The Outdoor Exploration Zone is an area in which children develop physical skills while learning to socialize with peers. Children will enjoy a track on which they can race cycles, swing, teeter-totter, and other fun activities that engage peer interactions.

## PLAY AND SOCIALIZATION ROOM

In the Play and Socialization Room children learn skills necessary to appropriately play with toys as well as socialize with peers. Language and interaction are key areas of focus in the Play and Socialization Room.



## MULTISENSORY ROOM

Similar to the High Impact Zone, the Multisensory Room meets the sensory and self-regulation needs of children at the other end of the spectrum. In the Multisensory Room children will experience lights, bubble tubes, vibrating mats, and images projected on the wall all meant to provide a calming environment in which the child can calibrate the sensory stimuli that may interfere with learning.

## STEM LAB

The STEM Lab includes robots of various entry points. Children learn to code robots to move, light up, turn, speak, follow a path and respond to touch. Children as young as three interact with the robots and find success.

## ACADEMIC ROOMS

The Academic Rooms are where Texas Education Agency standards are taught directly to the participants. UMHB students communicate with parents, informally assess, write goals and lessons, and then implement the lessons with the participants. In some cases success in the Academic Rooms is dependent on children first experiencing the High Impact Zone or the Multisensory Room so that they are able to direct attention to the learning task.

## CLASSROOMS

UMHB courses are taught in the classrooms. Content includes the standards for teacher preparation and training for working with children with disabilities.

## 1:1 ROOM

The 1:1 Room is designed for the child who is overstimulated or distracted by the activities in the Academic Rooms. Rather than receiving their instruction in the Academic Room they would instead be taught in the 1:1 Room.





